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SUBJECT: CENTRAL AMERICA IN THE CONGRESS

1. FOLLOWING IS A STATUS REPORT ON LEGISLATION AFFECTING  
 OUR INTERESTS IN CENTRAL AMERICA:

2. ON MARCH 14 THE SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE  
 APPROVED BY VOICE VOTE AN ADMINISTRATION REQUEST FOR 93  
 MILLION DOLLARS IN SUPPLEMENTAL FY-1984 MILITARY AID FOR  
 EL SALVADOR, AFTER DEFEATING BY 16-13 A PROCEDURAL  
 AMENDMENT OFFERED BY SENATOR INOUE THAT WOULD HAVE  
 DEFERRED CONSIDERATION OF THE EL SALVADOR AMENDMENT. THE  
 SUPPLEMENTAL FUNDS WERE ATTACHED AS AN AMENDMENT TO A BILL  
 PROVIDING 150 MILLION DOLLARS IN EMERGENCY FOOD AID FOR  
 AFRICA WHICH HAD PASSED THE HOUSE EARLIER. ADMINISTRATION  
 OFFICIALS EXPLAINED THEY HAD RESORTED TO THIS PROCEDURE  
 SINCE THE FY-84 MILITARY AID REQUEST FOR EL SALVADOR WAS  
 SERIOUSLY UNDERFUNDED IN THE SECOND CONTINUING RESOLUTION  
 OF NOVEMBER 1983; IT NOW APPEARS THE APPROPRIATIONS  
 COMMITTEES WILL NOT MARK UP THE FY-84 SUPPLEMENTAL FOREIGN  
 AID APPROPRIATIONS UNTIL JUNE; AND THERE IS URGENT NEED  
 FOR THE REQUESTED MILITARY AID IN EL SALVADOR TO HELP  
 ASSURE THE SECURITY OF THE ELECTIONS.

3. ON MARCH 15 THE FULL SENATE APPROVED AN AMENDMENT  
 OFFERED BY SENATOR DANFORTH TO THE LOW-INCOME ENERGY  
 ASSISTANCE BILL TO ADD ON 90 MILLION DOLLARS IN EMERGENCY  
 FOOD AID FOR AFRICA. THIS ACTION, TAKEN BY VOICE VOTE,  
 STRIPPED THE AFRICA FOOD AID BILL WITH ITS EL SALVADOR  
 AMENDMENT INCLUDED OF MOST OF THE FOOD AID COMPONENT,  
 LEAVING THE BILL MAINLY AN EL SALVADOR EMERGENCY AID  
 MEASURE WITH VARIOUS OTHER CONTROVERSIAL AMENDMENTS  
 INCLUDED.

4. CENTRAL AMERICA INITIATIVE: AFTER EXTENDED DEBATE  
 AMONG THE DEMOCRATS ON THE HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
 COMMITTEE, THE COMMITTEE ON MARCH 14 VOTED TO SPLIT OFF  
 THE CENTRAL AMERICA PORTION OF THE FOREIGN AID BILL AND  
 REPORT OUT TWO SEPARATE BILLS. A WORLDWIDE FOREIGN AID  
 AUTHORIZATION BILL, EXCLUDING CENTRAL AMERICA, WAS  
 REPORTED OUT ON MARCH 15. ACTION ON THE COMMITTEE'S  
 VERSION OF A CENTRAL AMERICA AID BILL -- WHICH IS LIKELY  
 TO BE CLOSE TO THE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE DRAFT OF THE  
 WESTERN HEMISPHERE SUBCOMMITTEE -- WAS DEFERRED UNTIL

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AFTER THE MARCH 25 ELECTIONS IN EL SALVADOR.

5. FUTURE ACTION: AS NOTED ABOVE, THE EL SALVADOR EMERGENCY AID REQUEST IS EXPECTED TO REACH THE SENATE FLOOR SOMETIME THIS WEEK. THE HELMS SUBCOMMITTEE ON WESTERN HEMISPHERE AFFAIRS OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WILL HOLD HEARINGS ON THE CENTRAL AMERICA INITIATIVE ON MARCH 20. THE FULL FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE WILL BEGIN ITS MARK-UP OF THE WORLDWIDE FOREIGN AID BILL, OF WHICH THE CENTRAL AMERICA PACKAGE IS A PART, A WEEK LATER ON MARCH 27. HOUSE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN FASCELL HAS NOT INDICATED WHEN THE COMMITTEE WILL CONSIDER THE CENTRAL AMERICA AID BILL; NOR HAS THE HOUSE LEADERSHIP YET SCHEDULED FLOOR ACTION ON THE WORLDWIDE BILL (EXCLUDING CENTRAL AMERICA). SHULTZ  
END OF MESSAGE

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